1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000 42°. But he feels the cold, and at night, when walking, may be met
513 carrying a glowing ember held close to his navel for warmth, while
374 in camp he sleeps on the ground between two fires, and in house, field-hut or village dormitory sleeps generally on a platform of criss-crossed bamboos or creeper rope with a fire beneath it. He
513 has usually also a sleeping mat or *masni* (Halbi) made of a special grass, which is easily rolled up and carried about when he visits Jagdalpur or a touring officer's camp; or he may use instead of it his *taghali* or bark rain coat. He sleeps generally on his side with his head resting on his arm, the other arm resting on the ground in front with the elbow bent; and he will shift from side to side. It is *polo*, that is taboo, for a woman to sleep on a cot or platform, and she must sleep on the ground in her room in the house.

Bodily attitudes

The Bison-horn Maria has generally a cot to sleep on, and even his wife often has one. In such matters he is getting more and more like the ordinary Hindu villager.

516 For eating or social conversation or resting, the Hill Maria often sits with his buttocks on the ground and his knees drawn up, though he sometimes uses the familiar Indian squatting position, and his women usually squat in this way for mourning at funerals or singing at weddings. The men have also little wooden stools to
● [352] sit on, or sit on a stone, as at the commensal feasts; while in the villages where there is the custom of the *gaita* or headman and the *kasyeq-gaita* or Village Mother priest sitting on an *uddamgarya* or seat of honour to preside over meetings of the elders, it is often a flat stone resting on stone legs, on which he sits in ordinary sitting posture. In any group of Hill Marias resting after a meal or on a march you will see almost every attitude that might be adopted by English schoolboys except lying prone on back or stomach. If standing, a favourite position of all the tribes in Bastar is to stand on one foot, the other knee being bent so that the sole of the foot may rest against the outer side of the standing leg, the arm on the same side as the bent knee catching hold of a bough or something for steadiness. Another favourite position is to stand with the left leg braced, the right slightly flexed so that the left hip is extended sideways; the left wrist or knuckles rest on this hip, while the right hand rests on the left shoulder, the right arm being bent at the elbow to look like a V over the chest; or else the right arm is hung loosely at the side, or held in that of the next youth. For fire-
[372] making they kneel on their knees. They stand to urinate and squat to defecate.

[514] The Bison-horn Maria uses mostly the same positions, but is more prone to imitate Hindu habits; he squats to urinate.*
*[See cat. 116, p. 418. - Analyst]

HILL MARIA *PANCHAYAT*, ITULNAR
showing religious and secular headmen seated on stone udam-garya seats

[face p. 190

I: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

623
516
352

[facing p. 290]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

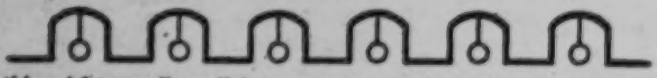
883 X
342
353
31
831

on the central pillar.[1] In the small Kolur ghotul there is one slender pillar covered with carvings of the vagina, as always showing the clitoris, but here there was a double clitoris and a clitoris upside down.

At Markabera there were similar carvings of the vagina with the clitoris.

Often a chelik may be seen with an enormous penis, a motiari in his arms. The boys say that these carvings are very useful as an approach to girls. It may be that the vagina in the central pillar is the relic of a custom now forgotten of initiating smaller boys by pressing them against it.[1]

The walls of the ghotul are often decorated with drawings and paintings. In 1940 there was a fine display in the Remawand ghotul. The following year I saw a frieze of fantastic paintings (illustrated in Plate LXVIII) at More Berma. At Netagaon there were models of motiari, tigers and a monkey. In Urdabera there was a model of a chelik with his motiari, and over the door a mud model of a horse. In Dengaon, there were modellings of a chelik and motiari riding on a horse. At Kuntpadar, one wall was well decorated with drawings of a boy, a vagina, a girl, a bow and arrow and the sun and moon. At Palki there was the representation of a bird trap:



But this might equally well be a sexual symbol, similar to the design of the phallus within the vagina that I noted at Metawand:

883 X
352
[531]

The day-time visitor to a ghotul will find little enough there by way of furniture. Cots are never used; everyone sleeps on the ground. Seats and stools are rare, but in many ghotul are to be found long narrow pieces of wood raised some two inches from the ground. These are the *kutul* which may be used either as seats or pillows. Some are very long and suggest the custom of several boys and girls sleeping together. They are often carved with geometric designs, figures of boys and girls, crude representations of the vagina. I have one with four breasts carved on its under-side. Occasionally you may see a *kutul* with a little drawer hollowed out below for storing necklaces or other ornaments during the night. As far as I know these head-rests are the corporate property

FIG. 54. *Kutul* from Talabera showing small drawer for keeping ornaments. *Length 1' 7"*

[1] A remarkable parallel from an English Public School (Repton) is provided in Dunton Welch's *Maiden Voyage* (London, 1943), p. 42. The author is describing the House dormitory. 'Two lips had been painted on one of the beams and all new boys had to

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

of the ghotul, though they are usually appropriated by particular boys for the period of their membership.

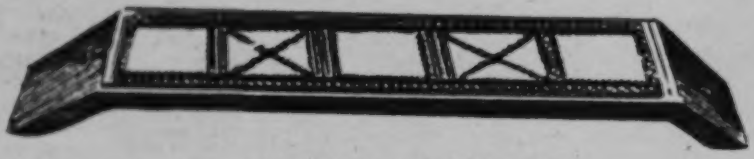


FIG. 55. Carved head-rest from Markabera
Length 5' 6"

In eastern Kondagaon drums are usually kept in the ghotul; at Masora a dhol-drum hangs under the verandah roof—it is the local habitation of Lingo

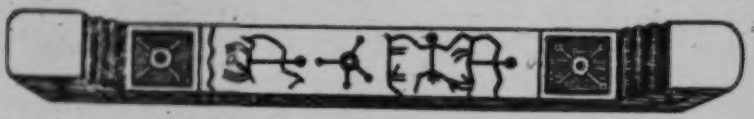


FIG. 56. Carved underside of wooden head-rest from Kumli
Length 4'

Pen. At Dongrigura and other villages in this area, the whole ceiling is of drums, a fine and impressive sight. Special officers are appointed to provide rope for hanging them up and to see that they are kept in good order.

Flutes are often pushed into the thatch, but dancing-sticks are kept in the shrine of the Village Mother. I have never seen the emblem of a god, a flag or a 'horse' in the ghotul, nor any village symbol, but in Palli Barkot there was a bundle of blessed seed hanging from the roof.

There are often little holes in the wall for keeping tobacco and other small treasures. Sometimes too there are holes in the floor—for husking the rice that is brought home from the Pus Kolang and other expeditions. In one or two ghotul I have seen holes low down in the wall to serve as urinals. Outside in the courtyard there may be a large flat stone for washing clothes, but this is probably an innovation for the benefit of outsiders.

Inside the ghotul compound there is generally a stack of grass for thatching the roofs. Outside are tall piles of firewood, which may be stacked criss-cross about a central pole or piled up in the forked branches of a tree. Sometimes long poles are stood upright against and round a tree. In Jhakri I saw near the ghotul four different ways of storing the chelik's wood—it was stacked horizontally criss-cross round a tree; it was laid in parallel rows between two trees; it was criss-crossed between two upright poles tied together at the top by a rope; and it was stacked upright against a tree.

These stores of wood play an important part in the consciousness of every Muria boy, for his earliest ghotul memories are of his duty to add one or two pieces to them every evening, failure to do so earning dreaded punishments.

pull themselves up by their arms, to kiss them. I remember straining up, and at last reaching the yellow pitch pine and the two crimson lips. They looked indecent, for some reason; as if they were the drawing of another part of the body.' If the boys were not quick or could not reach the lips, they were flicked with wet towels, as an encouragement.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

Plate LXXI

352
291
301

Chelik of Toinar with his ghotul 'wife'

[p. 364 (N)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

pipes. These are lit with little bits of glowing coal picked from the fire, and when half-smoked or not in use are generally kept tucked into the turban or hidden in a hole in the ghotul wall.

But the chelik do not rely only on the tobacco supplied them in the ghotul. Any enterprising boy has tucked into his loin-cloth or hanging (sometimes with a bunch of bells or cowries) at his waist a specially-made tobacco-pouch. These *gota* are, as a glance at the illustrations in Figs. 82-4, 93-5, 99, 103-4, and 109-14 will show, elaborate and varied. They are of every size and shape. One is like a fish, another carved like a wheel, a third resembles a mango. Some are of garud, moda or koraya wood, others are cut from the kernel of a fruit, a few are of brass. The stoppers are fitted tightly with a little lac. Some are covered with the testes of a goat or sambhar. Most are elaborately carved.

Many of the *gota*-pouches are named. There is the *dudong-gota*, round as a girl's breast; the *chakka-gota* (Fig. 77), a beautifully carved wheel; the *hemul*, or tortoise pouch (Fig. 79) with its elaborate designs; the charming *marka-batta-gota* (Fig. 112) shaped like a mango; the *kaldri-gota* (Fig. 83); the *min-kap-gota*, with its decoration of fish bones; the *lumur-gota*, whose carving resembles the flowers of the ebony tree; the *girna* or lizard *gota* (Fig. 82); and the *damera-iching-singar gota* (Fig. 110) with its elaborate silver decorations. Some of the *gota* have a deliberately sexual purpose; the *pude-gota* (Figs. 94 and 99) has small representations of the vagina carved on it and the *dudo-muri* (Fig. 101) has marks that are supposed to resemble the pimples round the nipples of a woman's breast. The chelik show these to girls to excite them. But, indeed, as I show in another chapter, to ask for tobacco is itself a polite way of asking a girl for sexual congress.

The Muria grow tobacco in specially fenced gardens near their houses and sometimes in enclosures made on the banks of stream or river. When it is ready, it is cut and allowed to dry in the garden. Then it is placed between layers of kodon straw 'which turns it red in a few days'. After this it is dried again, this time on the roof of the house, and finally tied up in bundles with home-made string.

VI. The Sleeping-mat

The *pir* or *mahsi*-mat is an important piece of ghotul furniture. When a boy joins the ghotul for the first time he is expected to bring a mat which is usually made for him by his mother or an aunt. Later on, especially in the *jodidar* ghotul, a girl ought always to make a mat for her special chelik, but elsewhere the mats seem to be made by a boy's mother, sister or some other female relative. At a marriage a new mat is usually presented to the bridegroom.

The mat is not difficult to make. A rectangle is marked out and pegs driven into the ground at its four corners. Bits of bamboo are tied between the pegs at opposite ends of the rectangle and a dozen or more strings of hemp or grass are tied from one end to the other so as to form the warp. Before they are attached, they are threaded through the holes of the *ach*, a wooden instrument illustrated in Fig. 96 which is used to beat the grass into place. The woman sits down with the *ach* before her and threads bits of reed or grass over and under the strings. After she has threaded two or three she sprinkles them with water and pulls the *ach* sharply towards her several times, thus pressing the grass into position. This is done over and over again until finally the mat is complete.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

These mats are kept at home and boys or girls bring them rolled up under their arms at night to the ghotul. In some villages this is the special duty of the girls. When they arrive they go round saluting the boys and presenting them with their mats. This is known as *Marni-johar*.

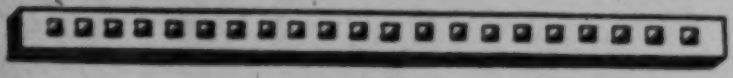


Fig. 56. The wooden dab used for making a *marni*-mat
Length 2' 10"

The mat is very definitely a sexual symbol and many ribald jokes are connected with it. The new mat given to a bridegroom at his marriage is generally smeared with oil 'to make it slippery'. Once when I was sitting down in the village of Angaon a chelik brought me a *marni* but an old man said, 'Don't sit on it, it is covered with semen', and everyone thought it very amusing. It is supposed to be a great honour to be given a mat by the chelik, probably just because it is a symbol of so much excitement and romance.